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004198
October 5, 1963
6:24 A.M.

I M M E D I A T E

S E C R E T

ACTION IMMEDIATE DEPT 640 INFO CINCPAC 384 ROME EIGHT
FROM SAIGON OCT 5, 6 PM

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AT SUGGESTION ITALIAN AMBASSADOR, ITALIAN CORRESPONDENT GAMBINO (ESPRESSO) CALLED ON TRUEHEART THIS MORNING TO REPORT AN INTERVIEW HE HAD WITH NGO DINH NHU OCTOBER 3. ACCORDING TO CFN 640 384 5 6 PM 3

PAGE TWO RUMJIR 25A S E C R E T
GAMBINO, CONVERSATION CONSISTED LARGELY OF NHU TIRADE AGAINST AMERICANS. IN SUBSTANCE, NHU HAD SAID THAT AMERICAN AID WAS VALUABLE BUT AMERICAN PRESENCE AND ADVISORS WERE NOT. AMERICANS KNOW NOTHING ABOUT GUERILLA WAR, ETC. HE ACKNOWLEDGED VALUE OF HELICOPTERS AND IN FACT SAID THAT THEIR USE IN OPERATIONS IN VIETNAM WAS HIS OWN "INVENTION". HOWEVER, VIETNAMESE CAN AND SHOULD BE TRAINED TO FLY THEM. IN SUM, GAMBINO RECEIVED CLEAR IMPRESSION AND MEANS TO REPORT THAT NHU IS PREPARED TO GIVE UP AMERICAN AID IF THAT IS THE PRICE REQUIRED TO GET RID OF AMERICAN PRESENCE.

NHU ALSO COMPLAINED BITTERLY THAT AMERICANS WANT HIM TO LEAVE COUNTRY AND MADE NOW-STANDARD COMMENT THAT HIS DOING SO WOULD RESULT IN COLLAPSE OF STRATEGIC HAMLET PROGRAM. HE ALSO DWELLED ON IMPORTANCE OF HAMLET MILITIA AND STRESSED HIS DESIRE TO GET RID OF CIVIL GUARD AND SELF-DEFENSE CORPS. LATTER WERE MERE FUNCTIONARIES WHO ALIENATED POPULATION BY STEALING CHICKENS, ETC.

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E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.6
NLK-09-1A
By MCP NARA Date 2/09

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IN LATER CONVERSATION WITH THUAN, TRUEHEART DESCRIBED NHU'S REMARKS ABOUT AMERICAN AID AND ADVISORS, COMMENTING THAT WHAT NHU HAD TOLD GAMBINO SEEMED TO GO WELL BEYOND HIS STATEMENTS TO CFN

PAGE FTHREE RUMJIR 25A S E C R E T
WARREN UNNA LAST SPRING. THUAN SAID THAT THE REPORT WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTING BECAUSE PRESIDENT DIEM HAD JUST APPROVED DRAFT OF HIS "STATE OF THE NATION" ADDRESS TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 7 - WHICH CONTAINED PASSAGE EXPRESSING DEEPEST APPRECIATION FOR AMERICAN AID AND SPECIFICALLY PAYING TRIBUTE TO CONTRIBUTION TO VIETNAMESE EFFORT OF AMERICAN ADVISORS, CIVIL AND MILITARY. THUAN REMARKED "IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHETHER THIS PASSAGE STAYS IN THE SPEECH, BUT THE PRESIDENT HAS ALREADY APPROVED IT."

FOR ROME: WOULD APPRECIATE SUMMARY OF WHATEVER GAMBINO FILES ON NHU INTERVIEW. GP-3. LODGE
BT

NOTE: Advance copy to S/S-O at 6:34 a.m., October 5, 1963.

NOTE: Passed White House, October 5, 1963, 6:51 a.m.